Jewellery worth £14.5m belonging to Imelda Marcos goes under the hammer

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The staggering horde includes a barrel-shaped diamond worth at least £3.5 million

By **Sam Webb**

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A £14.5million jewellery collection that once belonged to tyrant's widow Imelda Marcos will be sold at auction.

The staggering hoard was seized when late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his family fled the Philippines to Hawaii in 1986 following a popular revolt that ended his two decades in power.

It includes a barrel-shaped diamond worth at least £3.5 million and a Cartier diamond tiara many times more valuable than the previous estimate of £20,700-£34,500.

The 86-year-old's massive shoe collection, said to be in the region of 3,000 pairs, shocked the world and became a symbol of the excess of corruption in the poverty-stricken Southeast Asian nation.

She was allowed back into the country in 1991, after the death of her husband, and currently serves as a congresswoman.

Bling: A set of necklace, earrings and brooch valued at $1.4 million in 1986 (
Image: Getty)

Andrew de Castro of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, an agency tasked to recover the Marcos' ill-gotten wealth, said it hoped to hold the exhibit and auction before the end of President Benigno Aquino's term in June.

The government's privatisation council, headed by the department of finance, approved the sale of the jewellery last week.

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Spoils of power: Hundreds of pairs of shoes that belonged to Imelda Marcos (Image: Getty)

A portion of the collection seized at the presidential palace when the Marcoses fled is still being contested in court.

Other items were seized in Hawaii and at Manila's airport.

"The jewellery confiscated from the Marcoses remain a singular manifestation of the misguided priorities of the Marcos presidency during his reign," commission chairman Richard Amurao said.